

The Gentle Art of Cold Reading

by Lee Earle

I said the secret words
and tripled my income!

I'm talking about Cold Reading. A combination of flim-flam, applied psychology, and glib entertainment, this marvelous and simple technique persuades folks to believe that you know more about them than they ever thought possible. Knowledge like this will prove to be one of the most valuable assets in your performing repertoire.

Only one hundred and seventy seven words long, this reading was developed at a major university and evaluated by test subjects to be over 90% accurate every time!

Now on audio CD, "The Gentle Art of Cold Reading" includes the original "Classic Reading" plus valuable excerpts on doing readings from Lee Earle's "[Money Making Mentalism](#)". Additional tips and audio segments update the material into the 21st century.

Includes a supplemental booklet packed with hints, tips, techniques, and distilled experience - the inside information which, up until now, has been closely guarded by some of the industry's most successful performers.

Eighteen audio tracks help you learn Cold Reading the easy way. Discover how to make the reading sound fresh and new every time. Even when the ladies cluster around you (and they will) listening to what you say to every person, each will receive different and personalized information when it's her turn. You'll even find out a method which gets your spectator to make the reading more accurate by doing the work for you.

SYZGYPRESS

The Classic Reading

by

Lee Earle

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Let me tell you why I started doing cold reading.

For many years I made my living here in the Phoenix and Scottsdale area as a Jack-of-all-trades magician. A large aerospace company was having its holiday banquet at one of the area's well-known resort hotels and engaged me to provide tableside sleight-of-hand entertainment.

I approached one of those "ten tops" (a round table seating ten persons) and before I could deliver my first clever line, a woman turned towards me, and in her most condescending

voice said, 'You're going to do tricks, aren't you? We are having a good time here, go to one of the other tables!'

As with most entertainers, I have learned to handle rejection, but seldom did that rejection come before I *did* anything...so I worked an adjacent table. I concluded my set at that table with Alex Elmsley's "Between the Palms", a lovely card piece wherein the signed selected card appears between the spectator's palm-to-palm hands. It rates a 10.0 for impact and a 3.8 for difficulty. Taking the signed card from the lady whose hands I borrowed, I thanked her and delivered a short, impromptu palm reading.

After I thanked those at the table for their attention, I turned to leave...and there were three ladies standing in line behind me, all with their palms extended, eager for a reading. One of them was *the woman who chased me from the other table!*

It doesn't take a nuclear detonation to get my attention.

I hope I have yours.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joe Earle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joe" and last name "Earle" clearly distinguishable.

The Gentle Art Of Cold Reading

The reading described in these pages is a "stock" reading which, over the past few years since 1949, has been in print many times. I am going to show you how to profit from it!

One of the reasons it has seen such widespread dissemination is due to its effectiveness. More than 80% of the people to whom you deliver this set of psychologically designed general statements will agree that it is quite accurate. Many will agree it describes them perfectly!

In fact, if the subject is convinced that the reading is unique to her, that it is derived from information you "see" in her palm, her aura, her handwriting, her casting of the runes, or from any other accepted oracle, the probability of her considering it an accurate match increases still further into, according to the research, the 93rd percentile.

The simple needs of Love, Health, and Money are universal. If one includes these elements in a reading, the client will probably call it a success. Humans are more alike than different, so we all have problems taking root in many of life's similar circumstances. Childhood, adolescence, marriage, work, children, illness, and death are common sources of anxiety to most of us. By touching upon many of these common denominators, the Classic Reading is universally applicable.

First and foremost, you must really like people. If you have something to prove, if you take delight in the put-down, if you want people to believe you have a special power, stop reading. Put the book down and don't bother listening to the audio tape. You have wasted your money, there's no sense in wasting any more of your time. Because you can't fool ***any*** of the people ***any*** of the time in this business. They can spot a phony a light-year away: You can't fake sincerity.

There is only one real consideration in giving a successful reading. Tell the lady what she wants to hear. Period. You are an entertainer who works one-on-one. Give the lady what she wants. If she wants a tongue-in-cheek reading because she is really a skeptic out for a good time, then bury your pride and deliver a light, humorous reading. If she treats you seriously and hangs on your every word, then ham it up a bit and layer it on a little thicker. She is paying the freight, so let her choose the route and destination.

There are several other steps you can take which will have the effect of raising the perceived accuracy of the reading.

One of the first steps demands that you must behave as if you believe in what you are doing. If you appear to take yourself seriously then your clients will reward you accordingly. If you use palm reading bits like, "I see your wardrobe growing...it says so right here on your clothes-line", you will fail. They don't want comedy, they want *romance*! If you want repeat dates, deliver the reading with confidence and chutzpah (audacity).

There is no need to set yourself up as a target for challenges from skeptics. By assuming an attitude of modesty about your ability to deliver a reading, you defuse your possible detractors. You make no outlandish claims, you just read her character and deliver the information. Whether she chooses to believe you is not your concern. A non-confrontational, smiling attitude is what works here.

Set the client up to do your work for you. The best readers always include a statement like, "I only see pieces, as in a jigsaw puzzle. It is up to you to put them together," or, "I may speak of a person being crushed by a house as in 'The Wizard of Oz,' but you recognize it as a friend with overdue mortgage payments." This attitude has the additional advantage of enlisting the active participation of the client. She is always searching for meanings to your statements and, when she makes the connections, will vividly remember them later. The better her mental images the longer she will recall, and try to validate, your statements.

Be prepared to be a good listener. Sometimes a client will tell you a great deal about herself, if you give her the chance. All it takes is an appropriate moment of silence on your part. This information can be paraphrased back to the client later in the reading. Often a client will pour out her heart and soul just because she is lonely and has found someone who will listen. (I *said* you have to *like* people.)

There are a couple of reasons why you should use a prop such as a crystal ball or an "accepted phenomenon," such as a person's aura, upon which to base your readings.

First is that reason I quoted earlier: When you appear to make the reading unique to that individual, the percentage of "hits" goes up. Tarot cards, smoke prints, rune stones, astrology, and numerology are all wonderful oracles for readings. I prefer the palm as the basis of my readings; almost everyone has at least one, an intimacy is established through personal contact, and I get some very accurate feedback (muscle reading).

The second reason for basing the reading on your interpretation of physical attributes is that while you gaze deeply into the crystal (or stare at the astrology chart), you are using that interval to formulate what you will say next.

Be observant of your client's reactions. Both to your statements (which serve to guide the reading) and to the physical evidence as well. Notice whether she carries a Gucci purse or if he wears a phony Rolex. The quality and the condition of the clothes can speak volumes. If the client has a cultured southern drawl, you would assume one set of generalities; for someone with a Bronx accent, quite another. When reading for a lady in a group, *watch her friends for their reactions to what you tell her.*

Use lots of word pictures. "I see someone sitting on the edge of the

dark Cave of Eternity..." is a great deal more dramatic than, "You were very ill once in your life." Wrap each detail you reveal in layers of imagery. It's mysterious, romantic, and it expands the reading. When you evoke images, the client will begin to visualize along with you, bringing her more "into" the reading.

Don't tell 'em everything you know. Or at least allow your client to believe that you always know more than you are prepared to disclose. This takes advantage of the "Curiosity Factor" and generates repeat business. It also gives you the reputation of one in whom a confidence can be placed.

Never claim you are genuine. We are getting pretty close to fortune-telling and many communities have ordinances restricting that activity. Say something like, "If you have a medical problem, see a doctor; if you have a legal concern, consult an attorney; if you need advice concerning money, schedule an appointment with a financial advisor."

"We are dealing with matters of the inner self," you further state. Some readers even ask the client to sign a legal disclaimer before beginning the session.

Find opportunities to do mini-readings everywhere you go. For many years, I wore an ornate magnifying glass on a silver substantial silver chain around my neck. The necklace was 'masculine' enough not to be taken as an effeminate affectation and unusual enough that people almost always asked something like, "Is that a locket you're wearing?"

That's when I'd explain that it's a magnifier which aids me in examining the lines in people's hands when I read their palms. This statement almost guarantees an outthrust hand from the person to whom you are speaking, providing another opportunity to practice your craft.

When at airport service counters or hotel reception desks, if there weren't other customers waiting (*and especially after the attendant had dealt with an unruly or difficult customer*) I'll often say to the attendant, "May I see your left hand, please?" They will almost always extend their hands, sometimes asking why. That's when I take the outstretched hand, turn it palm up, examine it for a moment and say, "It figures. I'm a palmist and just wanted to confirm something I noticed in your demeanor - you have the patience of a saint. Now I know how you find the strength to put up with as many consumer hassles as you do."

More than once this little kindness has resulted in an upgrade to a seat in the first class section or to a suite instead of a normal hotel room. And if it doesn't, I've still brightened someone's day. Try it.

And a final suggestion: You will end up dealing with a very broad cross-section of humanity if you do readings long enough. Sooner or later you will read someone who really has problems; serious ones which

require greater skills than you are likely to possess. You have the potential for doing great good or great harm. Don't try to be an amateur psychologist. The safe course is to suggest professional counseling. Remember, with some clients everything you tell them is gospel. **They will act on what you say!** So go easy. Take a page from the Hippocratic Oath that physicians swear to, and "First, do no harm..."

Now as concerns the reading itself: It is not sacred. Each of the individual phrases stands alone, so feel free to mix and match. If you have two or three people in a row lined up to have their palms read, each overhearing the other readings, you can vary the reading by delivering the second reading reversed in content. The first line thus altered might read, ***"You are an independent person who is very selective in choosing lifelong friends. Often you don't care what others think about you."***

Each of the main lines of the reading (*in bold italics*) can be expanded upon should you get a strong positive or negative reaction from your client. Alternative paths are given for each main line. Those which are marked with a "(+)" are the ones you follow when you receive a positive response, agreement, or nod. If a line is marked with "(-)" then use it when you get a negative reaction or no feedback at all.

THE TWELVE STEPS

You have a strong need for other people to like you and for them to admire you.

(+) Many times you will "go along" just to avoid a confrontation. After a disagreement, you will often be the first to apologize, even though it isn't necessary or required on your part.

(-) But you shouldn't become disappointed when others take only a surface impression of you; you have facets of your personality of which very few others have been allowed a glimpse. You value your privacy more than most.

You have a tendency to be critical of yourself.

(+) You are frequently your own worst enemy, always searching for imperfections with yourself. It seems you are not happy unless you are finding fault with your appearance, your behavior, or your attitudes. Sometimes this spills over into your evaluation of others. People disappoint you because you try to hold them to the same high standards which you set for yourself.

(-) This is not a self-destructive criticism, but is instead a form of positive reinforcement. You, more than anyone, are aware of your past failings but you have also learned great lessons from them. You know

where your weaknesses are and you can fortify them. You don't allow those little imperfections to weigh you down. More important, you are aware of your strengths and have learned to amplify them. You are an optimist; your glass is always half-full, never half-empty.

You have a great deal of unused capacity which you have not turned to your advantage.

(+) You have an inclination to procrastinate. That is not all bad - many times you will turn a problem over in your mind, examining it from all aspects, then put it away - ignoring it until the deadline for action grows closer. Then, usually in the middle of the night, your subconscious will deliver the perfect solution. Right out of the blue.

(-) Sometimes you feel at the limit of your resourcefulness, stretched to the breaking point. You have a difficulty in saying "no" when others ask for your help and often find yourself with too full a plate. You would be better served if you learned to be more forceful when others make demands on that one, irreplaceable commodity; your time.

While you have some personality weaknesses, you are generally able to compensate for them.

(+) You are a survivor, always concealing your "hole card," keeping something in reserve. You often allow people to underestimate you, not feeling comfortable with the raised expectations of others. You have cultivated the ability to "land on your feet."

(-) Lately you have been more willing to confront those inner traits and the shell of denial has been cracked. If you are not careful, you can allow yourself to refocus upon those imperfections, often forcing aside other, more productive attitudes. You have a great deal to offer the world if only you learn to recognize it in yourself. You are more capable than you think.

Your sexual adjustment has presented some problems for you.

(+) As a child you probably felt you were ready for your first - umm, *dalliance* - a little ahead of most of your contemporaries. You have, over time, come to grips with your inner feelings and are now in better control of your emotions. You are much more comfortable with your sexuality now.

(-) The best description for you might be "late bloomer." Other, more sexually precocious friends seemed to take the lead. As a young woman you felt within a white-hot, searing cauldron of emotion for which you could not find suitable release. I see you now as someone to whom a hug or a close embrace can be as fulfilling as something more active.

Disciplined and controlled on the outside, you tend to be worrisome and insecure on the inside.

(+) I can see you tossing and turning, running over past mistakes and future uncertainties when you should be sleeping. Leave the past in the past. Learn from it but focus yourself forward. Concentrate upon your strengths and abilities. You see so many problems and obstacles, most of which never develop. Remember to take time to smell the roses.

(-) You have maintained the external appearance of calm and poise for so long that many of those attitudes have become automatic. It is that very attention to detail which has contributed to your success. Be wary of developing an impenetrable exterior; it keeps danger out, but also keeps you bottled up within.

At times you have serious doubts as to whether you have made the right decision or done the right thing.

(+) You must keep in mind that others place great faith in you and your abilities and wouldn't have made that investment if you weren't ready for the challenge.

(-) Usually those doubts manifest themselves in second thoughts and "what if's." You are so goal-oriented that you are constantly searching for some way to improve your performance.

You prefer a certain amount of change and variety and become dissatisfied when hemmed in by restrictions and limitations.

(+) The bureaucratic attitude infuriates you; you have little patience with those who just "get by."

(-) That doesn't mean you are wildly experimental, however. "A place for everything and everything in its place" could still apply to much of what you do.

You pride yourself on being an independent thinker and do not accept others' opinions without satisfactory proof.

(+) And the proof has to be on your terms, not just formula and hypothesis. The understanding must come from within. Fast talking, slick sales pitches turn you off.

(-) You have, however, proven to have an open minded attitude. You are willing to listen to what other people have to say before making your decision.

You have found it unwise to be too frank in revealing yourself to others.

(+) In the past you were hurt because others did not keep the confidences you have shared. As a result you are very careful in personal relationships when it comes to secrets.

(-) By the same token, you are a person who, if trusted with secret information, will carry that confidence to your grave. Earning and keeping trust is very important to you

At times you are extroverted, affable, sociable, while at other times you are introverted, wary, and reserved.

(+) Your mood seems to swing depending upon the reactions of those around you. You are extremely sensitive to your social environment.

(-) You do your best to make others comfortable by mirroring the emotions and attitudes which others display. On the inside you remain pretty much on the straight and narrow.

Some of your aspirations tend to be pretty unrealistic.

(+) You have a well developed imagination; if you are not careful you can lose yourself in fantasy. Often you tend to look at things the way they "should be" rather than the way they really are.

(-) Fortunately, you are a person who has learned her strengths and limitations; you seldom take on a project which you aren't sure you can complete. You prefer to taste in your mind the fruit of the tree before you plant the seed.

Some Further Caveats

You should conclude every reading with a positive, upbeat, encouraging summary.

If you are one who subscribes, as I do, to the theory of self-fulfilling prophecies, you will appreciate the potential of a few minutes of ego-pumping and flattery. All too often in this world we are being told, "You can't...you mustn't...you shouldn't..." In a reading, the client should be told that she **can** excel, that success **is** just around the corner - all she has to do is **turn that corner**.

When you need filler material, use your own experience as a model. Not only is it good therapy for you, it will probably be recognized by the client as "coming from the heart." Divulge your inner feelings using **her** perspective. Disclose your secret fears, of failure, of success, of mediocrity, wrapped in the cloth of the reading. Confession is good for the soul.

Caution those for whom you read that, although the goals they want to achieve are within reach, they must still ***make the effort*** to grasp them. Before I begin the reading, my clients are reminded, "*If you have come to me for answers, you are wasting your time. I don't have the solution to your problems. **You** do. There is nothing magic about this reading. I shall merely point out your strengths which have been forgotten; your abilities which have atrophied; your options which have been obscured. Consider this reading as your flashlight. It will pierce the darkness and illuminate the path, but you must still walk the path yourself.*"

May ***your*** path take you on the high road.

Recommended Reading

"The Mental Mysteries and Other Writings of William W. Larsen, Sr.,"
Edited by William Larsen, Jr., The Genii Publishing Company

"Dynamite Mentalism," George B. Anderson, Magic Inc.

"Red Hot Cold Reading," Thomas K. Saville Ph.D. and Herb Dewey

"Quick & Effective Cold Reading," Richard Webster, Brookfield Press

"King of the Cold Readers," Bascom Jones

"Commercial Cold Reading," (Audio Tape), Richard Webster

"Psychometry from A to Z," Richard Webster, Brookfield Press

"Passages," Gail Sheehy, Bantam Books

"The Clustering of America," Michael J. Weiss, Harper & Row

"The Art of Cold Reading," Robert A. Nelson, Micky Hades Publishing

"Sensational Answers," Robert A. Nelson, Micky Hades Publishing

"The Conative Connection," Kathy Kolbe, Addison Wesley Publishing
Co., Inc.

THE CLASSIC READING

You have a strong need for other people to like you and for them to admire you.

You have a tendency to be critical of yourself.

You have a great deal of unused capacity which you have not turned to your advantage.

While you have some personality weaknesses, you are generally able to compensate for them.

Your sexual adjustment has presented some problems for you.

Disciplined and controlled on the outside, you tend to be worrisome and insecure on the inside.

At times you have serious doubts as to whether you have made the right decision or done the right thing.

You prefer a certain amount of change and variety, and become dissatisfied when hemmed in by restrictions and limitations.

You pride yourself on being an independent thinker and do not accept others' opinions without satisfactory proof.

You have found it unwise to be too frank in revealing yourself to others.

At times you are extroverted, affable, sociable, while at other times you are introverted, wary, and reserved.

Some of your aspirations tend to be pretty unrealistic.